

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

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**Vision:** To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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## Chikungunya Fever– Information for Clinicians

**Please contact Florida Department of Health- St. Lucie County's Epidemiology Program (FDOH-SLC EPI) by the next business day if you suspect a patient has a chikungunya infection to ensure prompt mosquito control efforts.**

Chikungunya, a dengue-like illness, has just been identified in 10 patients from the Caribbean island of St. Martin. Outbreaks have been documented in Africa, Southern Europe, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and islands in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, prior to this introduction into the Caribbean. Spread to other areas in the Caribbean is a concern. **An infected person should avoid mosquito bites while ill to prevent infection of local mosquitoes.**

**Transmission** occurs through the bite of an infected mosquito. Chikungunya infection can also occur in neonates (aged <1 month) via transmission from infected mothers during the intrapartum period.

**Incubation** period is 2-12 days.

**Clinical Presentation:** A majority of people infected with chikungunya virus become symptomatic. Infection is characterized by acute fever and polyarthralgia, and can result in chronic joint pain and fatigue of several weeks to years duration. Other symptoms may include: headache, myalgia, arthritis, or rash. Children may have more mild illness than adults.

Persons at risk for more severe disease include: neonates exposed intrapartum, adults > 65 years of age, and persons with underlying medical conditions (e.g., hypertension, diabetes, or cardiovascular disease).

Patients with suspected chikungunya fever also should be evaluated, tested and managed for possible dengue virus infection if travel was to areas where both are present as co-infection is possible.

**Please contact FDOH-SLC EPI if you have a patient that has:**

- Acute onset of high fever and polyarthralgia with or without recent (2 weeks prior to onset) travel to an endemic area including the Caribbean.

### Laboratory testing

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) can be used to detect viral RNA in serum samples collected during the first week post-symptom onset. Virus-specific IgM and neutralizing antibody testing should be requested for serum specimens taken > 1 week post-onset. Both acute (< 1 week post onset) and convalescent (> 1 week post onset) sera should be collected. FDOH-SLC EPI can provide guidance on how and when to submit samples to the Florida Department of Health Bureau of Public Health Laboratories.